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FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8491
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 0281
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 0368
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 0953
RUEHJA/AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY 0102
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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 000359

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/11/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [ELAB](#) [KU](#) [TIP](#)
SUBJECT: UNDP REPORTS PROGRESS ON KUWAIT-HOSTED LABOR
CONFERENCE

REF: 06 KUWAIT 2235

Classified By: Ambassador Richard LeBaron for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (C/NF) UNDP Kuwait Deputy Director Mohammad Al-Nassery told PolOff on March 10 that the Minister of Social Affairs and Labor (MOSAL) had written a letter formally approving a Kuwait-hosted international labor conference in May. The conference would bring together mid-level representatives of labor-importing and exporting countries to discuss their mutual rights and obligations. The UNDP has been working to get approval to hold this conference for well over a year. Al-Nassery believes that the approval of the conference will not be reversed, even if the minister is replaced in the current cabinet reshuffle. He noted that MOSAL had formed an internal committee in recent weeks to prepare for the conference. (Note: The GOK has given previous indications that it would go forward with the conference, only to have progress stop without explanation (ref A). End Note.)

¶2. (C/NF) Al-Nassery said he was happy the conference seemed to have momentum but expressed concern about some of the details. He noted that the UNDP's original aim had been a UN-sponsored, ministerial-level conference that would tackle major policy issues and produce a statement of principles to which Kuwait and other Gulf countries could be held accountable. The MOSAL approval is for a GOK-sponsored, lower-level conference that deals with more detailed issues, such as minimum wages and work conditions. The Minister of Social Affairs and Labor (who just resigned along with the entire cabinet) told Al-Nassery that the other GCC countries had opposed a ministerial-level conference, but that he would continue to lobby for a ministerial-level event. Al-Nassery said that the UNDP plans to push for delaying the conference until September. They hope this will give them time to lobby for a more substantive, higher-level conference.

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LeBaron